

**WEATHER**

Mon - Sunny | Hi 61 | Low 46  
Tue - Mostly Sunny | Hi 62 | Low 47  
Wed - Partly Cloudy | Hi 61 | Low 52

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'A FRESH LOOK AT OUR CHANGING WORLD'

APRIL 10 - 12, 2006

# Volkswagen's 'Force of Good' Tour Arrives in New York

By **BENJAMIN YOUNGQUEST**  
*Epoch Times New York Staff*

NEW YORK—Some call it “random acts of kindness.” Someone lends you a quarter just when you need one, or shows up with a cup of coffee when you’re about to call it quits, as if you have been visited by an angel in human form. This is the theme behind Volkswagen’s act of charity and publicity campaign called “the Force of Good tour”—and it has just arrived to New York City.

A fleet of new Volkswagen Beetles and Touaregs has been touring the country on a mission to bring small acts of kindness into the lives of ordinary people, and now the caravan has arrived in New York City and has teamed up with Citymeals-on-Wheels to put another notch in its belt of kindness.

Citymeals-on-Wheels will be delivering daily hot meals to the elderly and shut-in around the city as usual,

but they will be doing it in style. A troupe of 22 Beetles and Touaregs will give the delivery vans a break and the delivery drivers a chance for a little fun.

“I think our deliverers and drivers are going to have a lot of fun driving around in these cool cars for a week. It gives our vans a well-needed rest,” said Rachel Sherrow, Director of Programs and Community Affairs at Citymeals-on-Wheels.

“What they [Volkswagen] are doing is giving us some Tauregs and some Beetles for 10 days, and we’re going to deliver some meals with them,” she said.

Together, the two organizations will bring 17,000 hot meals to the elderly, primarily aged 85 and older, who are unable to cook for themselves and in many cases cannot leave their homes to go shopping. According to Sherrow, for many of these elderly, the delivery person is the only routine human contact in

their lives.

Noting that the drivers are paid and not volunteers, Sherrow said that they are very dedicated and hard-working.

“They are the ones on the front line who not only have a connection with the client because they see them every day, but they are there to help if something happens to the senior or if they need a little extra,” she said.

Don Tanner of Volkswagen America is very excited about the joint effort. He said that Citymeals-on-Wheels is just the type of organization that they look to partner with on their mission to be a force of good.

“You know, as we travel the country we’ve been looking for outstanding organizations. This was a good fit because they do deliver food. Their vehicles could always use a rest and a little bit less wear and tear. So it was really a perfect fit. They are an outstanding organization that could really use some vehicles to help them



**A GOOD CAMPAIGN:** Volkswagen Beetles line up outside City Hall on April 7. The cars are part of Volkswagen of America’s act of charity and publicity campaign called the Force of Good tour.

do their job,” said Tanner.

The Force of Good tour has New York City as its final destination, and the group’s arrival in the city coincides with the auto show being held at the Jacob Javits Convention Center this month. The Volkswagen Beetles, Touaregs, and other new models will be on display at the show.

Volkswagen will have at its booth a downloadable video podcast of the cross country tour-to-do-good. Every time some one downloads the podcast, Volkswagen will donate one dollar to Citymeals-on-Wheels. Tanner hopes to raise \$12,000 dollars, which will go toward purchasing another 2,400 meals.

# Should Illegal Immigrants Be Helped or Sent Home?

By **EVAN MANTYK**  
*Epoch Times New York Staff*

NEW YORK—Right now, the fate of 11 million illegal, or undocumented, immigrants hangs in the balance as the U.S. government in Washington, DC debates whether these immigrants should be kept or sent home—and meanwhile, some are concerned that the immigrants who continue pouring in the country are taking jobs from those who are legally here.

One bill being debated in the U.S. House of Representatives, H.R. 4437, would create a new federal crime of “unlawful presence” that would apply to illegal immigrants—basically cracking down on the estimated 11 million illegal immigrants living in the United States. Another competing bill in the U.S. Senate would allow the 11 million immigrants to register, pay a fine and meet several other requirements to achieve legal resident status and citizenship.

What do you think about immigration reform?



**Natasha**

“I wish I had a clear picture of the risks... Everything gets turned into left and right. As a citizen, I’m not given the tools to objectively look at the issue.”

“I don’t think the answer is to allow illegal immigration, but I don’t think the answer is sending away the people who are already here.”



**Laurence Berg**

“I think the whole immigration system needs to be revised to treat all people with respect and dignity. No human being is illegal.”



**Marianna Arteaga**

“I don’t think it should be any easier for those people here then for those in their home countries who are trying to legally come to the U.S. Because you’re illegally here doesn’t give you an advantage, but we should let more people in, otherwise we will keep perpetuating illegal border crossings.”



**Louis English**

“We need some kind of bridge for the 11 million immigrants from where they are at to citizenship. But they need to work for it and learn English.”

“If we start these people on some kind of path to citizenship you have to man the borders better to make it fair.”

# Community Groups Want Better Zoning in Queens

By **SEAN SEID**  
*Epoch Times New York Staff*

NEW YORK—As the Department of City Planning’s proposal to rezone 130 blocks in Maspeth and Woodside approaches fruition, Councilman Eric Gioia, local residents, and housing advocates called for an inclusive housing plan, hoping to strike a balance between providing affordable housing ownership opportunities and satisfying developers, along Queens Boulevard in Woodside, Queens.

“If you want to build up higher instead of having either a flat lot or to build a taller building I want there to be a portion of that building set aside for home ownership opportunities for the middle class,” said Gioia, who represents Woodside, Sunnyside, Long Island City, Astoria and Maspeth.

In a plan under review by the Department of City Planning, a majority of the blocks targeted for rezoning by the plan will be downzoned to smaller-size lots more suitable for commercial use.

So far Queens Borough President Helen Marshall, the Queens Borough Board, and Community Boards 2 and 5 have signed for the plan. Gioia’s proposal for an inclusive housing plan, the first of its kind for Queens, was heard earlier this week at a hearing with the Department of City Planning.

“The councilman’s idea is to strike the balance between the desires of the developer and the needs of the community... you’ll find in this rezoning a critical issue,” said David Rosasco, a member of Community Board 2 and Woodside resident.

Another local resident, Bette Casaro, also a member of Community Board 2, was concerned more about rising housing costs and lack of affordable housing.

“The need for housing is a daily, current stress on all of us. There’s a struggle going on in Queens and that’s a conflict we must resolve. Most of all, we want to be able to come home at night and turn the key to walk into a comfortable living situation, one that we can afford and enjoy,” said Casaro.

Besides advocating for affordable housing, Gioia called for the city to focus on building schools, parks and libraries for the neighborhood.

# Braving the Cold for Justice



**UNDAUNTED:** Despite the unseasonable snow, Falun Gong practitioners held a press conference in front of City Hall on April 5 to raise awareness about reported concentration camps in China, where practitioners of the peaceful meditation practice are having their organs harvested while still alive. The organs are then being sold for profit. Falun Gong was banned by the Chinese communist regime in 1999.

# Underdog Suozzi Campaigns for Governor in Brooklyn

By **JONAH OWEN LAMB**  
*Special to The Epoch Times*

NEW YORK—“Anti-establishment” candidate Thomas Suozzi toured Brooklyn in late March on his uphill campaign for governor. Suozzi, a Democrat who is little known in the borough, spoke with black community leaders in an effort to spread awareness of his campaign. Suozzi currently serves as Nassau County Executive.

In most recent polls, he held 14 percent of the vote compared to his Democratic opponent Eliot Spitzer, the current attorney general, with 69 percent. And if the polls don’t look bad enough for this underdog, he only has \$5 million compared to Spitzer’s \$19. But this stubborn politician seems to like a fight. And he set out across Brooklyn to let people know just that.

“Some think it’s an unenviable position. I’m fighting against a huge establishment, I’m fighting against the system,” said Suozzi to a crowd gathered at the Akwaba Mansion in

Bedford-Stuyvesant.

At 11:00 a.m., on his second stop of the day, he visited the Haitian Americans United for Progress Community Center in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn. There, he shook hands and introduced himself to a dozen clergymen, social workers and community leaders from the Haitian community.

“Government and politics should look like the people they govern,” said Suozzi. Haitians “were distrustful of government” for good reason, they lived under dictatorships for years, he said. Despite his knowledge of Haitian history, for some community members this was the first time they had heard of the man.

“He is addressing problems directly as he should,” said Pudens Desvarieux, a 66-year-old Queens resident from Haiti who works at the community center. Although he had never heard of Suozzi before the meeting, Suozzi seemed to have swayed him.

“I believe in him,” said Desvarieux.

Other locals had only heard of him because of his underdog position.

“He’s an underdog because people aren’t exposed to him,” said Vincent Fraser, 63, a cabby originally from Jamaica who lives in Canarsie. “The more coverage he gets the better.”

At his last gathering of the day, Suozzi spent a half-hour at the Akwaba Mansion in Bedford-Stuyvesant. He spoke with medical professionals about disparities in healthcare. The group agreed that in neighborhoods like Bedford-Stuyvesant and Flatbush, poverty and discrimination had a huge part to play in the reason for lack of healthcare.

Dexter McKenzie, chairman of the Provident Clinical Society, noted that if the establishment had solved the current problems, they wouldn’t be talking about them, agreeing with Suozzi.

“I definitely agree, the problem is still around on the watch of the current guard,” he said.

State Democratic leaders have urged Suozzi to back out of the race so as not to create a battle between Democrats. Suozzi refused.

Going against the party bosses is no

new thing for Suozzi. After his four terms as mayor of Glen Cove, Long Island, he ran for higher office. He was the first Democratic executive to win election in Nassau County in over three decades, and upon election, set up a Political Action Committee in Albany to fund insurgent candidates like him in statewide elections.

While the two-term executive of Nassau County balanced a severely out-of-whack county budget, he also raised the ire of the biggest union in the county. In his efforts to shrink government employment numbers, he reduced their numbers by 30 percent. But while this may have been popular with some, his cost-cutting efforts created enemies. Also, when he reduced the pay of police officers (averaging \$100,000 a year), the Police Benevolent Association sued him for it.

Suozzi might have an uphill battle ahead heading toward the Democratic primary in September, but he appears to be fighting this race for keeps.

“I am working to win this race,” he said.